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ACTION: SS-45

INFO OCT-01 1046 W

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R 011235Z FEB 71
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6741

~~SECRET~~ ISLAMABAD: 0944

~~EXDLS:~~

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y

EYES ONLY FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO

SUBJ: POSSIBILITY OF EAST/WEST PAKISTAN SPLIT - CHINA'S ROLE

REF: ISLAMABAD: 930 *Vol 15-1 Pak*

1. DURING MY LENGTHY CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT YAHYA (REFTEL) HE WORRIED ALOUD ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A SPLIT-UP OF THE TWO WINGS. HE SAID THAT SUCH AN ACTION, TO HIM, WAS THE MOST DISTURBING ELEMENT IN THE CURRENT FORMULATION OF THE CONSTITUTION, AND IN THE POLITICAL PROCESSES WHICH MIGHT ADVERSELY FLOW THERE-FROM. HE SAID THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF GIVING HIS OFFICIAL SANCTION TO A CONSTITUTION WHICH HAD INHERENT WITHIN IT FACTORS WHICH WOULD BRING ABOUT DISSOLUTION OF PAKISTAN; A UNITED COUNTRY WAS A NATIONAL GOAL WHICH HE CHERISHED. PARAPHRASING THE WORDS OF AYUB KHAN, HE SAID HE DID NOT INTEND TO PRESIDE OVER THE DISSOLUTION OF PAKISTAN.

2. I RECALLED THAT I HAD CAREFULLY EXPLAINED TO HIM DURING OUR FIRST MEETING THAT IT WAS THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES TO RESPECT THE UNITY AND INTEGRITY OF PAKISTAN, AND THAT I HAD PUBLICLY REITERATED THIS POLICY ON EVERY OCCASION. FURTHER, I SAID THAT PROPAGANDA TO THE CONTRARY HAD BEEN SPREAD BY THOSE WHOSE INTERESTS WERE INIMICAL TO THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES; THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS COVERTLY ATTEMPTING TO DIVIDE THE TWO WINGS WAS NOT ONLY FALSE AND FALLACIOUS BUT THAT IT WAS CONTRARY TO THE MOST

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4

NND 969001

By HRM/vsw Date 11/24/97

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E.O. 12958, as amended
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ELEMENTARY POLITICAL OR MILITARY JUDGEMENTS. FURTHER, TO BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES SOUGHT OR DESIRED ANOTHER UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA COULD BE DEEMED LUDICROUS WERE IT NOT FOR THE FACT THAT SUCH A POSTURE HAD BEEN GIVEN CREDENCE IN THE PRESS AND UNFORTUNATELY WAS BELIEVED IN MANY PLACES OF HIGH POLITICAL IMPORTANCE.

3. YAHYA SAID THAT HE MOST CERTAINLY APPRECIATED REAFFIRMATION OF MY GOVERNMENT'S POLICY SINCE THE GOP AT TIMES HAD HEARD REPORTS TO THE CONTRARY WHICH HAD BEEN OF CONCERN IN HIGH COUNCILS. HE SAID HE INTENDED TO CONTINUE TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO HOLD THE WINGS TOGETHER BECAUSE, OTHERWISE, HE SAID THE DANGERS TO WEST PAKISTAN AS IT WOULD THEN EXIST, TO INDIA, AND GENERALLY SPEAKING, TO SOUTHEAST ASIA, WOULD BE ACUTELY MAGNIFIED.

4. IN RESPONSE TO MY REQUEST THAT HE EXPLAIN PRECISELY WHAT DANGERS HE FORESAW, YAHYA SAID THE MAJOR DANGER WHICH SHOULD BE OBVIOUS TO ANYBODY WHO HAD READ A MAP, OR STUDIED MILITARY STRATEGEMS, OR KNEW ANYTHING WHATSOEVER OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP, SHOULD REALIZE THAT A MILITARILY INSECURE, INDEPENDENT, AND GEOGRAPHICALLY SEPARATED EAST PAKISTAN WOULD REPRESENT A TARGET OF THE HIGHEST PRIORITY. GIVEN AN INDEPENDENT EAST PAKISTAN (EAST BENGAL) AS A STARTING NUCLEUS, YAHYA OPINED THAT IT WOULD BE ONE OF THE EASIEST POLITICAL MOVES ENVISIONABLE FOR THE CHINESE TO PULL INTO ITS ADJACENT AREAS, SPECIFICALLY WEST BENGAL AND ASSAM. EVEN NOW, HE SAID, BHASHANI'S FOLLOWERS WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY.

5. YAHYA HIGHLIGHTED HIS COMMENTS BY SAYING THAT THIS WOULD GIVE THE "DAMNED CHINESE PRECISELY WHAT THEY'VE WANTED FOR YEARS -- A PORT ON THE BAY OF BENGAL AND AN OUTLET TO THE INDIAN OCEAN." YAHYA WENT ON TO SAY THAT THIS WOULD ALSO GIVE CHINA THE OPPORTUNITY OF OUTFLANKING ALL OF SOUTHEAST ASIA IN WHICH EVEN BURMA WOULD FALL "LIKE AN OVER-RIPE MANGO" AND THAILAND, UNDER INCREASING PRESSURES, WOULD BE LOOKING FOR MEANS OF ACCOMMODATION. YAHYA CONCLUDED BY SAYING "IF YOU THINK YOU'VE HAD A MESS IN VIETNAM, JUST THINK OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF CHINA DOMINATES THE WHOLE AREA."

6. I EXPRESSED MY APPRECIATION TO YAHYA FOR HIS FRANK AND

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CANDID ASSESSMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MIGHT POSSIBLY
ENSUE FROM A SPLIT-UP OF THE TWO WINGS. I, TOO, HAD OBSERVED
THE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH AN "INDEPENDENT" NEW NATION
WOULD AFFORD TO CHINA. HOWEVER, I ADDED THAT I WAS NOT
PARTICULARLY KNOWLEDGEABLE OF THE THINKING WHICH WAS GOING ON
IN PEKING AND HENCE WAS PARTICULARLY APPRECIATIVE OF HIS
OBSERVATIONS.

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ARLAND

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